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SUBJECT: USUN TALKING POINTS FOR UNOWA CONSULTATIONS
JANUARY 21

1. ACTION REQUEST: USUN is instructed to draw on the points below during the January 21 UNSC consultations by the Special Representative of the Secretary General Said Djinnit concerning the United Nations Office for West Africa (UNOWA).
End Action Request.

2. Begin points:

- The U.S. welcomes the Secretary General's report and appreciates efforts by the UN Office of West Africa and its Special Representative Said Djinnit.

-- Today, I would like to make four points:

-- First, the United States supports the efforts of the UNOWA to pull together a more coherent and integrated UN effort across the sub-region for addressing the various challenges in West Africa.

-- Second, the United States also strongly encourages UNOWA to continue to play a role in the promotion of peaceful settlement of disputes and confidence-building measures across the sub-region, including in the Sahel and as chair of the Cameroon-Nigeria Mixed Commission.

-- Third, the United States strongly urges UNOWA to join the United States and publicly condemn the coup in Guinea and call for credible, free, fair and transparent elections as soon as possible in 2009. We note that the French government has also called for elections without delay and that both the African Union and the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) have suspended Guinea's membership. Now, when Guinea's military leadership has not yet solidified control, is when Guinea's partners can have the greatest impact on the junta and encourage a turn toward democracy.

-- Fourth, the United States thanks UNOWA for its efforts regarding Mauritania and urges its continued support of the firm AU position against the coup. The AU has requested such support from the international community, especially as it moves towards targeted sanctions against those who work to maintain the unconstitutional status quo in Mauritania.

-- We look forward to the continuing reports of the Secretary General.

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